



A MONTHLY ELECTRONIC NEWSLETTER TO THE 41<sup>ST</sup> ASSEMBLY DISTRICT  
(Including Agoura, Agoura Hills, Calabasas, Encino, Hidden Hills, Lake Sherwood, Malibu, Oak Park, Pacific Palisades, Port Hueneme, South Oxnard, Santa Monica, Tarzana, Topanga, Westlake Village, and Woodland Hills)

*June/July 2007*

## **Assembly Adopts 2007-08 Budget.**

Almost three weeks late because of a partisan impasse, and after a session that ended just before dawn on Friday, July 20, the State Assembly passed the 2007-08 budget, which, as you receive this newsletter, is awaiting action in the Senate. Although the Assembly has a 48-32 Democratic majority, California is only one of three states that requires a 2/3 vote of the Legislature to pass a budget. This means that Republican votes are needed – at least six in the Assembly and two in the Senate. This puts enormous power in the hands of a very few.



The big-ticket item was over \$1 billion in transportation dollars that were shifted away from public transit projects to help balance the General Fund. This was one of my biggest disappointments this year, and my staff is researching what the impacts will be on the Phase II extension of the Expo light-rail line from Culver City to Santa Monica, and what might still be done to keep this project on the existing timeline.

However, with the state's budget deficit larger than expected because of lower-than-predicted revenues, this shift did allow us to do important things like protect and fully fund K-12 and higher education, to protect SSI/SSP and CalWorks recipients, to maintain foster care transitional housing, and to fund programs for the homeless mentally ill. We rejected the Governor's proposed cuts to the Williamson Act Subvention Program, which is so critical to Ventura County's growers and agricultural economy.

Given the hard choices before us, I reluctantly agreed with my colleagues that the shift of transportation money was the only choice if we were going to do our duty toward schools, the elderly, the blind and disabled and other vulnerable Californians like foster children and the mentally ill.

Stay tuned because the Senate is still deliberating and the budget will not be final until the Senate concurs with the Assembly. We believe that the Governor is ready to sign off on the Assembly budget.

## Historic King Gillette Ranch Opens to the Public!

On June 30, the gates to this magnificent property in the heart of the Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area were thrown open. The public was welcomed to explore and enjoy this newest and unique public parkland acquisition. Located at the southeast corner of Las Virgenes Road and Mulholland Highway, a wide variety of tours, programs, and other recreational experiences are now being offered, including bird watching, family campfires, survival training, ranger tours, new trailheads, and much more. Acquisition of this special place is truly "a dream realized."

For more information, go to [www.lamountains.com](http://www.lamountains.com), or call (310) 454-1395, x106.



## Legislation to Clean up Former Rocketdyne Engine Testing Site Moves Ahead

This highly-contaminated property just north of the 41<sup>st</sup> AD has been the subject of countless enforcement actions, lawsuits, and other efforts aimed at cleaning it up to full U.S. EPA standards, and to do so as a precondition for the Boeing Company, that currently owns the site, to be allowed to release it for uses that could include homes. Boeing's predecessor, Rocketdyne, did rocket engine testing on the site for decades, and disposed of chemical and nuclear waste on the site in ways that can only be described as reckless. At least four of the nuclear reactors on site, which had no containment structures, suffered accidents, including a partial nuclear meltdown.

Although workers and neighbors alike have developed statistically high incidences of cancers and other illnesses, both Rocketdyne and Boeing have refused to clean up the site to any but the lowest possible standard. This means leaving 99% of the contaminated waste behind for future users to breathe in the dusty air, drink in the water, ingest through food grown in the toxic soil, etc.



Because the U.S. Department of Energy refuses to hold Boeing to a high standard of cleanup, State Senator Sheila Kuehl has introduced a series of bills in the Legislature over many years to try and force the issue. All have, so far, been successfully killed.

I am proud to be a principal co-author this year of Senator Kuehl's bill, SB 990, which will authorize the California Department of Toxic Substances Control to withhold signoff of cleanup of the site unless and until Boeing has done the cleanup to full EPA "Superfund" standards. This means removing 99% of the waste before it can be released for use, not leaving 99%. Boeing is aggressively roaming the Assembly halls, telling undecided Members that this standard is just too strict.

SB 990 has passed out of the State Senate, it passed out of the Assembly Environmental Safety and Toxic Materials Committee last month, and will be heard in Assembly Appropriations at the end of August. Although we do not foresee any problems in that fiscal committee, the bill then goes to the Assembly Floor, and needs to be signed by the Governor. It is not too early to start contacting the Governor. Boeing almost certainly has. Let him know that polluters must clean up their own mess, and that Boeing cannot be allowed to just walk away.

## Out and about in the 41<sup>st</sup> AD Photo Gallery



### **2007 Seabee Days at Naval Base Ventura County**

It's a matter of great personal pride for me to have Naval Base Ventura County as a part of the 41<sup>st</sup> Assembly District. It was wonderful to attend their annual "**Seabee Days**" last month, and very stirring to watch hundreds of the Marines stationed there in dress parade before the assembled community, local civic leaders and military command. Dramatic flyovers, marching bands and inspirational remarks highlighted the kickoff of the weekend's festivities.

### **Santa Monica High School Class of 2007**

Both of my children graduated from SAMOHI, and so I was especially honored to join many other distinguished guests at the graduation ceremonies in June for the Class of 2007.



## **Fourth of July** was a patriotic marathon!

The morning started with a hometown parade in Santa Monica. From there I dashed to Pacific Palisades for their annual afternoon parade that only seems to get bigger and better every year. This year the Parade Grand Marshal was entertainer Pat Boone, there with his wife Shirley. And the day finished with a spectacular nighttime fireworks show held by the City of Calabasas, where I welcomed the huge crowd of happy residents gathered on the Calabasas High School field. A great day!







Congratulations to the Las Virgenes Unified School District on the dedication of the long-awaited and beautiful new **Yerba Buena Elementary School** campus in Agoura Hills. This is a much-needed new school that will relieve overcrowding on the former campus that had been home to both Yerba Buena and Lindero Canyon Middle School. There are few things that I enjoy more than seeing a new school open and imagining the lucky children who will walk through those gates in just a few weeks.



**Operation Safe Canyons** launched. This joint project of the CHP West Valley Area, L.A. County Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky and the L.A. County Sheriffs, is a comprehensive traffic safety program to crack down on unsafe canyon driving in the Santa Monica Mountains. It is hoped that the new focused enforcement will quickly send a message to reckless drivers and speeders on our narrow mountain roads that there may be a CHP or Sheriff's Department cruiser waiting for you around that next bend.

### **Las Virgenes Creek Restoration**

Congratulations to the City of Calabasas as it broke ground this month on the restoration of a portion of Las Virgenes Creek in their city. The concrete lining of the creek channel will be removed, and the creek restored to wetland habitat and more natural functioning of stormwater runoff. It will enhance biological activity, re-establish the ecosystem, and be a model to help educate the public on handling urban watershed issues. This is a wonderful project and the city is to be commended.



## And in the Capitol...



*Adjourning Assembly session in the memory of Eric Tang, a National Merit Finalist and all-state athlete who died in a fall near a beautiful waterfall in Mexico at age 25. The grandson of refugees from Nazi Germany and Communist China, Eric was a student leader in the World Refugee Academy, was active with CalPIRG, and worked for several years for the California Clean Money campaign.*



*Former Congresswoman, and the nation's first woman Vice Presidential candidate, Geraldine Ferraro was in Sacramento this month. I was fortunate to have the opportunity to have dinner with her and to get to know this very interesting woman and political pioneer.*



*Filmmaker Michael Moore recently visited Sacramento. His film "Sicko" was released just at the time when the Legislature is debating several bills that would increase access to affordable healthcare in California.*

## 2007 Homeowner and Renter Assistance Claims

If on December 31, 2006 you were either age 62 or blind or disabled, and had a qualifying 2006 household income, you may be eligible for a refund from the State of California based on part of the property taxes that you pay or that you pay indirectly in your rent. 2007 Claim Booklets with more information and forms to apply are available on request from my District Office. Call 818-596-4141, 310-395-3414, or 805-644-4141, and a copy will be mailed to you.



## Fire Season is here. Already.

With California in a record-setting drought, fire officials, law enforcement, park agencies, and others are already dealing with wildfires that we should not normally be expecting until fall. A new study of fire risk in the Santa Monica Mountains has determined that with no spring rain, the moisture content in the live vegetation is now so low that it will burn exactly like dead brush. This means everything.

Clearly, it is even more critical now than ever to take all the precautions possible to prevent fires and protect your property.

- Don't smoke in the mountains.
- Keep your vehicle off dry grass.
- If you are camping and want to build a campfire, be certain that you are in a designated area where they are legally permitted. Better yet, forego campfires entirely in these dangerous conditions.
- Keep trees trimmed back away from your house, and clean dried leaves and debris (tinder!) off your roof and out of rain gutters.
- Observe proper brush clearance buffers around your home.

Take a walk around your property. See what dry and flammable items you have stored up against your house that a wind-blown ember would quickly ignite. Look for changes you could make to improve the chances of saving your home if a fire does come.



## "National Night Out Against Crime"

Sponsored for the last 24 years by the National Association of Town Watch, *National Night Out* is a nationwide event in which over 11,000 communities participate to promote

community/police partnerships and crime prevention.

On **Tuesday, August 7, from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.**, the Santa Monica Police Department is bringing it to the community with a twist with a 1950s style block party in front of the Public Safety Facility, 333 Olympic Drive. Entertainment will include The Wonderelles, an all-female group doing a 50s revue, contests and games for the kids, and lots of free food and prizes. McGruff the Crime Dog, the SWAT Team, K-9, and Mounted Units will be joined by the Santa Monica Fire Department.

**Parking is free at the new Civic Center Parking structure across the street from the Public Safety Building.** For more information, visit their website at [www.santamonicapd.org](http://www.santamonicapd.org).

## **Committee and Legislative Appointments**

**Chair, Assembly Budget Subcommittee #2 on Education**

**Aging and Long-Term Care**

**Budget**

**Budget Subcommittee #3 on Resources**

**Education**

**Natural Resources**

**Joint Legislative Budget Committee**

**Select Committee on Community Colleges**

**Legislative Liaison, Santa Monica Bay Restoration Commission**

**Legislative Participant, Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy**

**California Commission on the Status of Women**

### **HOW TO REACH ME:**

#### **District Office:**

6355 Topanga Canyon Blvd., Suite 205

Woodland Hills, CA 91367

Phones: (818) 596-4141 • (805) 644-4141 • (310) 395-3414

Fax: (818) 596-4150

#### **Capitol Office:**

State Capitol

P.O. Box 942849

Sacramento, CA 94249-0041

Phone: (916) 319-2041

Fax: (916) 319-2141

[democrats.assembly.ca.gov/members/a41/](http://democrats.assembly.ca.gov/members/a41/) or [www.assembly.ca.gov](http://www.assembly.ca.gov)